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ABSTRACT

Eight New Jersey State colleges which shared essentially the same goals and offered similar financial aid packages were studied in order to determine the relationship between persistence rates of disadvantaged students in opportunity programs and the role of faculty in such programs. Student data were provided by New Jersey's Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF) and covered students entering EOF programs as freshmen in summer 1980 and on through fall 1982. Information about the programs (admission criteria, administration, faculty role, institutional commitment to the program, program operation and services, and program directors' opinions about bars to retention and ways of improving retention) was obtained through indepth interviews with program directors. Examination of student and program data in terms of four quantifiable factors generally assumed to be related to retention--level of prior preparation, appropriate remediation, adequate counseling, and adequate tutoring--showed no direct relationship between these variables and retention rates. It is concluded that there is evidence to indicate that the crucial factor in retention is faculty involvement, and that retention rates can be improved if the college's faculty become integrally involved in the policy development, curriculum planning, instruction, and non-classroom operation of the programs supporting disadvantaged students. (CMG)

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MAXIMIZING RETENTION RATES IN COLLEGIATE PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

By the late 1960s and early 1970s most colleges and universities had in place special admissions programs for students with backgrounds of educational and economic disadvantage. While these programs have provided many students with an opportunity otherwise not available, they have not always accomplished what proponents of such programs would have hoped. For example, the National Center for Educational Statistics (1978) reported a withdrawal rate of 30.8 per cent among those students from low socioeconomic status families who received financial aid. While this compared favorably to the 52.6 per cent drop-out among low socioeconomic status students who did not receive financial aid, it did not compare well with the 22.6 per cent and 14.4 per cent drop-out rates for aided middle and high income students, respectively. Several researchers have estimated an attrition rate as high as 70 per cent for black students at white colleges (Carey, Singh and Pillinger, 1981).

A variety of research has attempted to uncover the reasons for these low persistence rates. For example, Cross and Astin (1981) confirmed earlier studies that indicated a positive correlation between high persistence and such factors as past academic achievement, the type of college the student attends, and the student's expectations upon entering college. Students who work more than 21 hours per week were found to have lower persistence rates than those who work less.

Bromery (1981) shows that a program for disadvantaged students can be highly successful if it has a strong tutorial component, a broad based counseling component and a carefully designed remedial program. Young (1981) cites research that goes somewhat further by its contention that there must also be a strong rapport between the students in the program and the faculty with whom they interact.

The objective of this study is to pursue further the relationship between persistence rates of students in opportunity programs and the role of faculty in such programs.

DATA SOURCE AND METHOD

The Equal Opportunity Fund (EOF) office within the New Jersey Department of Higher Education oversees a program that serves approximately 12,000 students in 50 participating colleges and universities in the state. It produces annual data concerning the students, including pre-collegiate academic levels, collegiate grade point averages, persistence data, and so forth.

The success of EOF programs in overcoming the academic deficiencies of students is thought to be contingent upon the support services provided by the colleges. Support services which institutions must commit to students in EOF programs include: basic skills remediations, counseling, tutoring and financial aid. The main thrust of tutoring and counseling is to remediate deficiencies and develop academic and personal skills essential for success in college. In order to assure that the EOF students start out on the right foot, the institutions offer summer programs which assess academic needs and commence remedial development work prior to the fall semester in which students formally attend regular college classes.

This study focuses on the first time, full-time freshmen who entered the EOF programs at the eight state colleges in the 1980 summer session. The statistical data supplied by the EOF office provides performance and retention information on a college by college basis through the fall, 1982 semester. Colleges with the best and worst retention rates were identified. Subsequently, two rounds of in-depth interviews were conducted by Dr. Walters with the directors of each college's EOF program in order to determine the characteristics of each program (i.e., what is attempted during the summer program, what services are offered during the academic year, how is the program administered, do faculty have any role in the program beyond classroom teaching, what is the level of institutional commitment to the program, so forth).

DATA

The retention data supplied by the EOF office for the EOF cohort of students who entered New Jersey state colleges in the summer of 1980 through the completion of the fall 1982 semester. While a more lengthy longitudinal study (covering 8 to 10 semesters) would yield better data, the five semesters covered in this report nonetheless can provide important insights into the general effectiveness of EOF programs.

In 1980, state colleges enrolled 1,376 EOF students in their summer programs, representing 27% of all summer enrollments in EOF programs statewide. Of these, 870 were first-time freshmen and 506 were renewal students.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF EOF STUDENTS BY SECTOR & RENEWAL STATUS
IN SUMMER PROGRAM 1980

Sector	Initial #	Initial %	Renewal #	Renewal %	Total #	Total %
State Colleges	870	17	506	10	1376	27
Independent Colleges	521	10	422	8	943	18
Community Colleges	814	16	651	13	1465	29
Rutgers/NJIT	502	10	826	16	1328	26
Total	2707	53	2405	47	5112	100

The major focus of the summer program is to provide testing and subsequent placement of students in remediation courses where intensive skill instruction is provided in mathematics, English composition, and reading.

During the summer of 1980, a higher proportion of students who enrolled in remedial and developmental courses completed remediation than during the academic year. The summer program provides an intensive academic atmosphere in which curriculum is tailor-made to the EOF population; course load is limited and specially selected faculty and staff work with students to remediate deficiencies.

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION LEVELS
OF REMEDIAL/DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES DISTRIBUTED BY SECTOR
FOR THE SUMMER 1980 AND AY 1980-81

	SUMMER		ACADEMIC YEAR	
	% Enrolled	% Completed	% Enrolled	% Completed
State Colleges	48	92	52	66
Independent Colleges	51	91	49	45
Community Colleges	22	86	78	59
Rutgers	32	87	68	71
NJIT	35	100	65	81
Total	35	90	65	60

Although the success of the summer program appears impressive, the six to eight weeks provided for summer instruction is not sufficient for many students due to the magnitude of their deficiencies. Many students require an additional semester or two of developmental education in order to perform successfully in college level courses.

Progress toward Graduation

During the 1980-81 academic year, EOF students at state colleges performed in the following manner: 78% of the students demonstrated satisfactory progress (earned 12 credits or more per semester), 96% of course credits attempted were completed with passing grades, and 59% of the students maintained a grade point average of 2.0 or better.

TABLE 3

INDICATORS OF EOF STUDENTS' PROGRESS
AY 1980-81

Sectors	Satisfactory Progress %	Credits Completed %	Cumulative Average 0-1.99 %	2-3.5 %	3.5+ %
State Colleges	78	96	41	55	4
Independent Colleges	70	60	37	59	4
Community Colleges	81	89	31	65	4
Rutgers	79	78	31	67	2
NJIT	88	86	38	61	1
Total	76	79	36	60	4

Retention

Most EOF programs retained more than 50% of their entering class through the first three semesters of enrollment. However, following the cohort through the fall of 1982, a significant decline in the numbers of students retained by the colleges is apparent.

TABLE 4

COHORT STUDENT RETENTION RATES
(DATE OF FIRST ENTRY - SUMMER 1980)

SECTOR	COHORT SUMMER 1980	FALL 80 #	FALL 80 %	SPRING 81 #	SPRING 81 %	FALL 81 #	FALL 81 %	FALL 82 #	FALL 82 %
State Colleges	909	827	91	728	80	617	68	341	38
Independent Colleges	521	436	84	394	76	273	52	231	44
Community Colleges	805	556	69	527	65	234	29	86	11
Rutgers	422	367	87	338	80	289	68	203	48
NJIT	70	70	100	67	96	47	67	39	56
TOTAL	2727	2256	83	2054	75	1460	54	900	33

EOF PROGRAMS AT NEW JERSEY STATE COLLEGES

Review of data supplied by the EOF office must be interpreted in light of its limitations. For example, data was not collected regarding why individual students in the cohort dropped out of EOF programs. Hence, we cannot determine whether students dropped out of programs for academic, personal, financial or bureaucratic reasons. EOF central believes that the three major reasons for withdrawal are academic dismissal, academic withdrawal and personal reasons.

Through discussions with the various EOF directors, we sought to determine the following: criteria for admissions, the program's administrative structure, the nature of the program is operations, what the director perceived as problems promoting student attrition, how retention might be improved, and so forth. To encourage candor, we promised institutional anonymity.

College 1

Admissions Profile

The recruitment of EOF students is a collaborative effort between the admissions office and EOF staff. Decisions regarding the acceptance of students and jointly determined. If the EOF counselor determines that a student should not be admitted to the college, the admissions office will support such a decision. Admissions decisions rely minimally on SAT scores and class rank, but reading level and recommendations are more important.

The College does attempt to admit students with a combined SAT of 600, or those who test at a 8th grade reading level. Many students are admitted with less than 600 combined SAT.

Administration of EOF Program

The program functions within a decentralized framework. Developmental services (remediation, tutoring, counseling) are provided by the college's developmental services division. Tutors are assigned to the EOF program; many of the peer tutors are former EOF students.

Within the decentralized framework it becomes imperative for the EOF Director to work closely with the financial aid office, the admissions office, the center for academic support, and faculty to ensure that the needs of the EOF program are met.

The director indicated that there are some disadvantages to the decentralized framework since considerable time is spent coordinating the services of the various divisions of the college, working with faculty and administrators, preparing reports for EOF central and supervising the day to day operations of the program - all to maximize academic and other services for EOF students.

Role of Faculty

Most faculty are supportive of the program; however, there are pockets of resistance to the EOF program. Some faculty feel that students of EOF caliber should not be at the college, and they resent having to teach such students. Faculty involvement in the program is limited to designing the summer courses and to teaching. Faculty for summer programs are appointed by both the Dean of Special Programs and EOF Director. Every attempt is made to identify competent faculty who are interested in working with EOF students.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believes that the administration of the college is supportive of the program and committed to the success of the program.

Operation of EOF Program

Not all EOF students are required to participate in the college's summer program; only those students needing remediation in more than one area are required to attend. Class attendance and tutorials are mandated, as are sessions with EOF counselors.

During the fall and spring semesters of the freshmen year EOF counselors intensely monitor the academic development of students. Faculty report (mid-semester) to the EOF counselors on the progress of EOF students. If more counseling or tutoring is required, appropriate steps are taken to see that students are provided with such services.

Retention of EOF Students

The director believes that the decentralized framework of the college negatively affects negotiating the EOF program as a result of the resource competition with other constituencies. Also, recent changes in the academic standards of the college may have adversely affected EOF retention.

The director believes that retention could be improved by admitting students whose high school achievement is stronger; there are plans to admit students with higher SAT scores and 10th grade reading level. He also suggests a more concentrated effort in the freshmen year, including more advisement, counseling, tutoring and monitoring of students as well as greater emphasis on skill development.

College 2

Admissions Profile

Recruitment of EOF students is done in collaboration with the admissions office and financial aid office. Sometimes an EOF counselor will go alone to recruit students. The director of the program makes the final determination about the applicant.

The criteria for admissions include: SAT and class rank, unacceptability through regular admissions, in-depth interview, high school transcript, and recommendations.

Administration of EOF Program

The director of the program reports to an academic dean. The director serves on the Development Studies Committee and meets with the various department chairs to apprise them of the needs of the EOF program. The associate director coordinates the development studies component of the program.

Role of Faculty

The director indicated that the majority of faculty are supportive of the EOF program. College faculty teach in the summer program; many of the faculty teach the same basic skills course during the regular college year. There is periodic feedback to the EOF program about progress of students.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believes that the administration is very supportive of the program, as evidenced by the services provided to the program, financial assistance to the program, and interfacing of the program with the academic, social and other aspects of the campus. According to the director, the program is a genuine part of the college community in every respect.

Operation of EOF Program

Summer students are tested for levels of proficiency in math, English, and reading. The summer curriculum consist of four courses--math, reading, science, and English. Attendance at class, tutorials and meetings with counselors is mandatory.

Students are tested for appropriate placement in Fall Semester courses at the end of the summer. They are required to meet with counselors on a scheduled basis, for advisement, attend tutorial sessions as prescribed and attend group sessions with other EOF students. Faculty send periodic progress reports to EOF staff regarding students in the program.

Retention

The director did not cite specific problems associated with retention. She thought that circumstances beyond the control of the program were the primary reason that students withdrew. For example, some were not ready for college; others had family and other obligations that forced them to withdraw.

The director stated that the program was doing the best it could do. She indicated that retention might be improved with more academic reinforcement, supervised study, affective education and counseling. She thought that retention is a college-wide issue, and that the best way to approach EOF retention was through a college-wide effort.

College 3

Admissions Profile

The EOF program works closely with the admissions office, which has the primary responsibility. The director of the program could exercise veto if there is sufficient grounds.

The official criteria for EOF admission to the program includes a minimum 640 combined SAT, completion of college preparatory high school curriculum, motivation and interest. Many students admitted to the program do not meet the criteria according to the director.

Administration of EOF Program

The director, who reports to an academic dean, described the program as one that was in transition. Many changes are underway as a result of academic policy changes at the college and the need for better direction and accountability for the EOF program.

According to the director, there is a concerted effort to collaborate with the academic leadership to develop programs to improve opportunities for success of EOF students. The director stated that he works closely with the financial aid office, and the basic skills director. In addition, the admissions and career counseling office assign staff to the EOF program.

The director, stated that he has the autonomy to make key decisions which affect the program, such as hiring faculty to teach in the summer program and deciding what will be taught.

Role of Faculty

The director believes that there is not enough support on the part of faculty for the program. There is reluctance to participate during the summer, due largely to the commitment and requirements needed in an intense and highly structured summer program. For these reasons, the director hires faculty from outside the college.

It is the responsibility of EOF counselors to monitor student progress. This requires communication with regular faculty, specifically as it relates to aspects of individual tutorials; but they seem insensitive to the program and the EOF students.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believes that the administrators but do not foster cooperation among divisions and support services essential for the program's success. The academic affairs area needs to be more involved as well as express interests in the EOF programs; additionally, the director thinks that leadership should be more sensitive to minority concerns on campus.

Operation of EOF Program

The summer program runs six weeks. Students are pre-tested for placement in math, writing and reading courses; ESL students take an intensified program of language development. Students are required to attend evening tutorials. Counselors meet with students in individual and group sessions to inform students about all aspects of college life.

Faculty who teach in the summer program are not college faculty. The director sees this as a positive factor for the summer program since the program is able to make demands on adjuncts that it would be reluctant to make of regular faculty: that is, all day attendance; providing individual assessment of students; and developing plans to remediate students.

Counselors advise students about fall course selection, make sure that students are in the appropriate remedial/development courses, and orient students to college life and what their responsibilities (as students) are in a collegiate environment.

Faculty in remedial/developmental labs and regular courses provide EOF staff with reports on EOF students progress throughout the fall and spring semester. Counselors generate monthly progress reports about freshmen. Throughout the year EOF staff host meetings to discuss better ways to serve EOF students; the attendance of EOF counselors at the divisional faculty meetings is an example of how this is accomplished.

Retention of EOF Students

The director indicated that part of the reason for poor retention of EOF students results from changed academic policies and strengthened standards at the college. Class attendance requirements, establishment of a more strigent grade point average requirement, and increased expectations of faculty have resulted in some students being dismissed or dropping out.

The director stated that more counseling, tutoring and more time at the remedial/developmental lab could improve retention. He noted that increased admissions standards along with a better supervised, mandated program during the freshman year (as in the summer program) would be of enormous benefit.

Faculty and college administrators could do more to contribute to the success of the program, according to the director who stated that he intends to lobby, socialize and advocate more aggressively for the needs of the EOF program.

College 4

Admissions Profile

The EOF program works closely with the admissions office in the recruitment of EOF students. The criteria for admission to the program includes: combined SAT of 750, C^+ average in high school grades, and performance on the college's in-house test (vocabulary, reading, and math). The director of the program makes the final decision on whether the student is admitted to the program.

Administration of EOF Program

The program falls under the jurisdiction of the dean of students. EOF counselors are assigned to the various schools of the college and meet on a monthly basis to keep abreast of issues as they relate to the EOF program. Counselors work closely with admissions, financial aid, and the skills center.

The director stated that the reliance on the skills center and the other campus-wide service offices, the EOF program does not always receive the technical assistance he believes the program requires. Limited faculty support also makes the development of remedial and development services less than desirable.

Role of Faculty

The director indicated that some of the faculty who teach in the summer program are regular college faculty; however, many are adjunct. Some of the courses are designed jointly by an academic department and EOF staff. The program enjoys good relations with the only four academic departments. Some individual faculty assist with the EOF tutorial efforts.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The administration is generally supportive of the program and tries to accommodate requests. The director believes that the administration should

view the goals, objectives, particularly retention of EOF students as a shared responsibility of the college and not just the responsibility of the EOF program.

Operation of EOF Program

The director of the program decides which faculty will teach during the summer. Every effort is made to recruit faculty who are both experienced and committed to the EOF program. Students are tested at the beginning of the program and the end of the summer, and placed appropriately in the fall. The curriculum during the summer covers biology, history, speech, reading, writing, math, and calculus. Peer counselors and peer tutors assist faculty during the summer, and there is close supervision throughout the summer and attendance to class and related activities are mandated.

Students must meet with their counselor once a week during the freshmen year. They must also attend tutorial sessions as prescribed. Faculty provide EOF staff with mid-term evaluations about the progress of students in the program. Students can be dismissed at mid-semester if their lack of academic progress warrants such action.

Retention of EOF Students

According to the director, faculty are insensitive to the students. In addition there is neither enough staff, nor technical support from the college. Also, the ESL program is inadequate. Further the lack of support systems results in student apathy. Since, many students have deficiencies that are difficult or impossible for the college to remediate, the limited dedication resources to the program results in low retention.

The director believes that there is a need for more sensitive faculty, particularly those with expertise in remedial and development teaching. In addition, he cites the need for and expanded curriculum to bridge the gap

between summer and fall and freshman year coursework--more preparatory courses. Further there should be greater communication and contact with academic departments. He believes that this could occur if the program were under the jurisdiction of academic affairs.

College 5

Admissions Profile

EOF counselors work closely with the admissions office to recruit students for the program. Counselors interview applicants before they are accepted to the program. Criteria for acceptance to program is as follows: The director of the program indicated that the college does not rely on SAT scores, but look closely at grades, recommendations, writing samples and personal interviews. The associate director, who reviews each application and supporting material ,makes the final decision on the applicants acceptance to the program.

Administration of EOF Program

The responsibility for administering the program rests with the director. He indicated that regular college faculty view the summer programs as too much work for too little money; hence, there is reluctance to participate in the summer activities. Most of the summer faculty are adjuncts who are recruited through advertisements and selected by the director on the basis of advanced training, previous experience in working with disadvantaged students; those who worked in the program before and were successful are eligible to work in the summer program are given preference.

The EOF program works closely with the admissions office, the college learning lab, the financial aid office and the office of student services. EOF counselors coordinate tutorials and counseling activities for the program.

Role of Faculty

The director initiates dialogue with faculty, serves on various college committees, and maintains contact with the various service delivery components of the college to ensure that the needs of the program are addressed. He noted that some faculty are supportive of the program, but many do not care some others are hostile to the program. Faculty assist in the development of summer courses and help decide what the content of course will be during the regular academic year.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believed that the president and senior officials at the college were supportive of the EOF program. This is partly out of genuine commitment and partly out of a concern regarding a shrinking enrollment base.

Operation of EOF Program

The summer program runs approximately seven weeks and all EOF students are required to attend. Reading, English, and ESL are taught. Students are tested at the beginning of the summer to determine levels of proficiency and at the end of the summer to measure progress and subsequent place in remedial or development courses for the fall semester. Close supervision, counseling and tutoring by EOF staff and summer faculty is intense throughout the summer.

In the fall students are placed in courses based upon summer progress and scores obtained on the New Jersey Basic Skills Placement Test. Students must attend counseling sessions, tutorials and freshman seminar sessions. Faculty are asked to supply EOF staff with mid-semester reports on the academic progress of EOF students.

Retention of EOF Students

The director cited the following bars to retention: many students have financial and other personal responsibilities which force them to leave the

program; the applicant pool is comprised of students that are too underprepared; many students fail to live up to their responsibilities; there is not enough counseling, given the 95 to 1 student/counselor ratio.

The director thought an effective remedial program would add considerably to retention. He also suggested the need for more staff to provide comprehensive tutoring and counseling through freshman year, and thereafter as needed. He cited the need for greater participation of faculty in the overall development of EOF program.

College 6

Admissions Profile

The EOF program works closely with the admissions office and financial aid office in the recruitment of EOF students. The admissions program focuses on five school districts with high percentages of minority students.

The criteria for admission in the program includes: 600 to 800 combined SAT, writing sample, extra curricular activities, class rank, and high school grades. The EOF director has the final say on which students are admitted.

Administration of EOF Program

The director of the EOF program reports to the director of Intra-Collegiate Academic Programs. The EOF program is an integral part of the college. Counseling staff have appropriate degrees, are involved in campus-wide activities, participate in career and professional development opportunities, maintain on-going communication with faculty.

Role of Faculty

The design of the summer curriculum is the responsibility of the department chairs. Faculty, who are involved in the program make substantial contributions: they teach summer courses; help recruit and train tutors; and help design curriculum. They are central to the program's operation. Faculty

provide periodic reports on EOF student progress to the EOF director during the regular academic year. The director felt that there was strong faculty support for the program, particularly by those faculty who also teach basic skills courses to non-EOF students.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believes that the leadership of the college is solidly behind and supportive of the EOF programs. Equipment, financial support and the various support services are provided for the program.

Operation of EOF Program

The summer program, which is a residential one, is mandated for all EOF students. Reading, English, ESL, and math are taught. Like many other programs students are pre-tested and tested after the summer session to determine appropriate fall placement. Tutors attend classes with students, work with faculty and follow-up on recommendations regarding tutorials.

In the fall, students are required to attend regular sessions with their assigned counselor and must attend their tutorials as prescribed. Counselors are in contact with remedial/developmental center, and the tutorial center on a regular basis. Faculty provide EOF staff with mid-semester evaluations of EOF students. If a student is on probation he/she must sign a contract which stipulates what must be done (attend class, counseling sessions, tutorials) to remain in the program.

Retention of EOF Students

According to the director, some students may not be ready for college, even though they express interest and display motivation when they apply, they get into academic trouble in more than one subject, get discouraged and drop out. Some students are counseled out of the program.

There is a need to establish better ratios between student and counselor (presently the minimum 95-1 as prescribed by statewide EOF guidelines) so that more counseling and monitoring can go on.

College 7

Admissions Profile

The EOF program works closely with the admissions office at the college. The criteria for admissions is flexible; however, SATs, high school grades and recommendations are considered.

Administration of EOF Program

The EOF program director reports to the dean of students, however program policy is determined by a faculty-dominated committee. As a result, the program works closely with faculty campus-wide, the skills development center, and other support service components of the college. The program is highly visible, is credible and is an integral part of the campus. There is strong support and significant contribution to the overall function of the program by faculty at the college. The EOF staff is serious and demanding of the students. They map out a plan of study for each student, and closely monitor student progress.

Role of Faculty

Faculty are the center of, not peripheral to, the EOF program. There is a shared sense of mission, agreement on goals of the program, strong active faculty and administrative support, and genuine regard for educationally disadvantaged students and their right to an opportunity for a collegiate education.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The program enjoys strong administrative support. Faculty are rewarded for their participation in the summer program and for their participation on the committee that oversees the program.

Operation of EOF Program

Students are pre-tested for summer placement in developmental courses. The structure of the program is tight and the curriculum is intense. Students are expected to assume responsibility for fulfilling the mandates of the program and must fully participate in all aspects of the program. Failure to comply results in immediate dismissal. Faculty believe that students should be integrated into the demands of college life as soon as possible.

Orientation sessions stress motivation, the importance of good study habits, the importance of library resources, and the various ways to avail oneself of the benefits that the college has to offer. Students attend classes in math, English, and writing.

In the fall, students, are monitored closely to ensure that they attend classes, tutorials and counseling sessions. Faculty in the skills lab are in close communication with EOF staff.

Retention

The college believes that the job it is doing is credible, given the type student in the program. Many students leave for personal reasons; some are dismissed for academic reasons or for failure to conform to the mandates of the program; and some leave because the level of academic deficiency is to great for the college to remediate.

The program does not wish to improve retention by admitting students who come to the college better prepared, but rather seeks to maximize its resources and those of the college in a way that effectively and realistically

remediates educationally disadvantaged students. The program is always looking at ways to improve its delivery system as is evidenced by the faculty's role in overseeing the program.

College 8

Admissions Profile

The primary responsibility for recruitment rests with the admissions office; however, and EOF counselor is assigned to work with the admissions office. The EOF office interviews applicants before they are admitted to the program.

The criteria for admission includes: SAT scores, high school grades, writing samples and interview.

Administration of EOF Program

The director indicated that he has responsibility for the program for several years. Previously the program was not administered effectively: staff was not supervised; there was little communication with other service providers at the college; and the program was lax in its responsiveness to students needs.

The director indicated that many changes have been instituted--all geared toward making the program more effective and the personnel more professional. The director communicates and interacts regularly with faculty, department chairs and remedial/developmental staff at the college. The director established goals and requires counselors to set goals; they are evaluated on how effective they have been in meeting stated program goals.

Role of Faculty

The director indicated that he has some influence in the selection of faculty who teach during the summer EOF program. Department chairs select

faculty to teach; the selection takes into consideration the needs of the program, as discussed in consultation with the EOF director. If a faculty member's past performance in the program is unsatisfactory the EOF director can refuse to allow that person to teach in the program.

The departments which offer courses during the summer design the courses. Since many of the faculty who teach during the summer also teach basic skills courses in the regular academic year, remedial and development pedagogical practices underpin the delivery of instruction. The director indicated that the summer faculty are genuinely committed to the program.

When asked whether the college's faculty in general are supportive of the EOF program, the director felt they were not. He indicated that some faculty are reluctant to work with students in need of remediation and some had little understanding of the EOF program and what it sought to accomplish. The director indicated that he viewed as one of his main tasks, working at familiarizing faculty with the program and the needs of its students, not just during the summer but throughout the year.

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

The director believed that there was genuine commitment from the administrative leadership of the college. The president and senior officials at the college are supportive of the EOF program. There is good cooperation between the financial aid office, the admissions office, the center for academic development and student services. However, the director expressed some concern about the location, furnishings and equipment allocated to the programs.

Operation of EOF Program

In the summer students are pre-tested and placed in remedial/developmental course which includes math, reading (communications), and writing. Peer

tutors work with students as needed. Students must attend counseling, tutoring, study hour sessions; there is close monitoring of these activities.

In the fall semester students are placed in appropriate remedial/ developmental classes. They are required to attend tutorial sessions and to meet on a regular basis with their assigned counselor. Counselors are required to monitor students and to insist that they meet their counseling and tutorial responsibilities. Counselors also meet with developmental faculty to ensure that early intervention is possible when students get into academic difficulty.

Retention of EOF Students

The director noted the problem of pervasive neglect, lack of supervision and poor communication between the EOF staff and support services of the college prior to his assumption of duties. He stated that the program could improve retention by the following: increased expectations and performance of counselors; better monitoring of students; improved delivery system of support services; more contact hours between counselors and students and earlier intervention and follow-up.

STANDARD MEASURES REGARDING RETENTION

It has been generally assumed that the retention of disadvantaged students is a factor of a number of measurable conditions or activities: level of prior preparation, appropriate remediation, adequacy of counseling services and adequacy of tutorial services.

Table 5 displays the retention rates for the succeeding three fall semesters of the EOF students who entered the New Jersey state colleges in the summer of 1980. As is apparent, there was little attrition after the first year and even greater attrition leading to the junior year. Attrition was most severe at Colleges 4 (69 per cent), 3 (67 per cent), and 2 (66 per cent) while retention was greatest at Colleges 6 (54 per cent) and 7 (51 per cent).

Table 5

SUMMER 1980 EOF COHORT
RETENTION RATE

Institution	Original Cohort	Students Retained					
		Fall, 1980		Fall, 1981		Fall, 1982	
		#	(%)	#	(%)	#	(%)
College 1	127	124	(98)	87	(69)	51	(40)
College 2	164	149	(91)	114	(70)	55	(34)
College 3	79	72	(91)	53	(68)	26	(33)
College 4	85	77	(91)	49	(58)	26	(31)
College 5	110	104	(95)	85	(77)	49	(45)
College 6	103	85	(83)	76	(74)	56	(54)
College 7	65	61	(94)	40	(62)	33	(51)
College 8	101	89	(88)	62	(61)	42	(42)

Criteria for Admissions

The Educational Opportunity Fund program stipulates that students must meet certain financial criteria and not be eligible for admission through the regular process at an institution (in the latter instance community colleges

are exempt). Since admission standards at the state colleges vary from college to college a student could be admitted at one college while being denied admission to another. Discussions with the various directors about their respective criteria for admission revealed that in some instances admissions criteria are designed in response to an institutions ability to serve the student or ensure that a program responds to the philosophy of the EOF program concept. Indeed, most directors believed that access is the most important operative in admissions; that is, a student should be provided with the opportunity to pursue higher education without regard to the institutions ability to remediate educational deficiencies.

The "academic index" provides a standard measure of the prior preparation of admitted students. It is a weighted index composed of the following elements and weighting factors: mean SAT verbal score 25 per cent; mean SAT math score, 25 per cent; mean high school rank in class, 50 per cent. It is used by the Board of Higher Education to assess the annual progress of New Jersey's senior public institutions in meeting the Board's goals of improving the quality of the regularly admitted class. Table 6 displays the academic index by college of the EOF summer 1980 cohort and compares these numbers to the base academic index (composite of the three years Fall 1978, Fall 1979, Fall 1980) for regularly admitted students at the colleges.

Table 6

Summer 1980 EOF Cohort
Academic Index*

Institution	EOF Students	Regular Admits**	Difference	Fall 82 Retention
College 1	155	186	-31	40%
College 2	153	188	-25	34%
College 3	155	192	-37	33%
College 4	157	205	-48	31%
College 5	156	173	-17	45%
College 6	170	204	-34	54%
College 7	162	192	-30	51%
College 8	146	191	-45	42%

*The Academic Index is a weighted index composed of the following elements and weighting factors: mean SAT verbal score, 25%; mean high school rank in class 50%.

**The Academic Index reported in this column is the composite of the 30 years (Fall 1978, Fall 1979, Fall 1980) for regularly admitted students.

The data indicate that the two colleges with the highest EOF academic indeces (Colleges 6 and 7) have the highest retention rates, but this relationship does not exist at the low end where College 8 with the lowest academic index ranks fourth in retention. The institution with the least favorable retention (College 4) ranks third in academic index.

If one examines the difference between the academic index of the EOF students and the regularly admitted students, there is still an inconsistent retention pattern. The college with the greatest difference (College 4) ranks at the bottom in retention but the college with the least difference (College 5) ranks only third, significantly behind the two leading colleges in terms of retention. Those two colleges rank fifth and third respectively in the closeness of the academic index of there EOF students to their regularly admitted students.

Remedial Programs

All of the colleges place EOF students into remedial programs based on their performance in such diagnostic tests as the New Jersey Basic Skills Placement Test. Only one college (College 1) does not mandate attendance of all EOF students in the remedial summer program; however most of its students do participate. That institution ranks sixth in academic index and fifth in retention.

Counseling Services

Each of the colleges is required to report to the Department of Higher Education's EOF office data concerning counseling and tutorial services. That data does not reveal a direct relationship between these services and retention at the state colleges. As is displayed in Table 7, the college with the greatest number of contacts between EOF students and their counselors during the 1981-82 academic year was College 3 which had the lowest retention rate. The colleges with the best retention rates rank fourth and fifth respectively in contacts per student. (While the figures in Table 7 include all contacts for all EOF students, not just the cohort being examined, we can assume that contacts for that cohort would run similarly.)

Table 7

Counseling Services to EOF Students
AY 1981-82

	Ave Contacts/Student	Fall 82 Retention (EOF Summer 1980 Cohort)
College 1	3.5	40%
College 2	4.7	34%
College 3	29.3	33%
College 4	15.0	31%
College 5	5.0	45%
College 6	9.0	54%
College 7	6.4	51%
College 8	18.0	42%

Tutorial Services

Similarly, as is evidenced by Table 8 (which has the same limitation as mentioned for Table 7), College 3, which has the greatest number of tutorial hours per student, has the next to lowest retention rate, and College 4, which ranks third in this category, has the lowest retention rate. The colleges with the greatest retention rates rank second and fourth in tutorial hours per student.

Table 8

Tutorial Services to EOF Students
AY 1981-82

	Hours/Student	Fall 82 Retention (EOF Summer 1980 Cohort)
College 1	9.0	40%
College 2	11.4	34%
College 3	54.8	33%
College 4	24.5	31%
College 5	16.5	45%
College 6	21.2	54%
College 7	34.4	51%
College 8	11.0	42%

Commitment of Upper-Level Administration

Thus, there does not appear to be a direct relationship between the quantifiable variables and the retention rate of the EOF student population. This leads us to consider the less quantifiable factors: the support from upper-level administration and the role of the faculty.

It was only at College 3 that the EOF director did not believe the administration to be supportive of the program. The EOF directors at Colleges 2, 6 and 7 were particularly proud of the support and commitment of institutional resources to their programs. Administrative support was manifested in the manner courses are scheduled for EOF students during the

summer program, accommodation of EOF students at developmental skills labs, additional financial support and housing requests, and timely responses to other program needs as they arise. The EOF directors at the other colleges cited good administrative support, however they believed that more could be done in support of their programs.

Role of the Faculty

The views expressed by the various directors regarding the participation of college faculty leads one to believe that this may be the crucial variable.

College 6 and College 7 have programs in which the regular faculty are major participants in the design and operation of the program. In fact the directors of both programs attribute the success of their EOF program to the strong participation of faculty. At both institutions senior professors and regular college faculty teach in the summer programs. In the summer program at College 7, faculty literally live with students throughout the summer: they are available throughout the day and evening; they participate in activities and act as mentors to students. The director at this college stressed the importance of involving faculty in the program, giving them a sense of genuine ownership in the program, while drawing on their intellectual and personal qualities. Similarly at College 6, the director works closely with faculty in planning curriculum and related activities. By contrast, Colleges 4 and 3, those with the least favorable retention rates, rely heavily on the use of adjunct faculty during the summer, as do Colleges 1 and 5. Colleges 2 and 8, which use regular college faculty in the summer program do not involve these faculty in a major way in the program's design or operation outside of the classroom.

CONCLUSION

We examined a number of variables generally believed necessary for a successful program for educationally disadvantaged college students. By using as our sample eight state colleges which share essentially the same mission and which offer similar services and comparable financial aid packages, we hoped to be able to identify those factors which distinguish programs with high retention from those with low retention. As a result, we believe that there is evidence to indicate that retention of disadvantaged students in collegiate programs can be improved if the college's faculty become integrally involved in the policy development, curriculum planning, instruction and non-classroom operation of the programs supporting these students. We are cautious in drawing this conclusion at this time because we have not conducted a review of the quality of the remedial programs and support services at these colleges. In addition, an examination of the performance of this cohort of students through the Spring, 1984 and Spring, 1985 semesters (the semesters that the students would be expected to graduate given the traditional four year and increasingly common five year attendance patterns) may shed further light.

In pointing to the centrality of the role of the faculty, we do not mean to down play the necessity for strong support services, for we cannot imagine a successful program that does not offer adequate counseling and tutoring programs. But, if these programs as well as the remedial curriculum are planned and overseen by the regular college faculty, they are more likely to be directed toward moving the students into the institution's educational mainstream. Further, when the regular faculty have a direct interest in the success of the program and its students, they can be very powerful advocates for the program with their colleagues and can serve as an anchor for the students.